

§ 635.509 Deficient or unsatisfactory maintenance.

(a) *Fund reduction.* If a State fails to certify as required by this subpart, or if the Secretary determines that a State is not adequately maintaining its Interstate routes in accordance with a maintenance program as required by this subpart, the Federal-aid highway funds apportioned to the State for the next fiscal year (after the date on which the State must certify) shall be reduced by an amount equal to 10 percent of the amount which would otherwise be apportioned to the State under 23 U.S.C. 104. In addition, future project approvals may be withheld by the Secretary under 23 U.S.C. 116.

(b) *Procedure for reduction of funds.* (1) If it appears to the Federal Highway Administrator that a State has not submitted a certification conforming to the requirements of this subpart, or that a State is not adequately maintaining its Interstate routes in accordance with a maintenance program as required by this subpart, the Administrator shall make in writing a proposed determination of nonconformity, and shall notify the Governor of the State of the proposed determination by certified mail. The notice shall state the reasons for the proposed determination and inform the State that it may within 30 days from the date of the letter request a hearing to show cause why it should not be found in nonconformity. If the State informs the Administrator before the end of the 30-day period that it wishes to attempt to resolve the matter informally, the Administrator may extend the time for requesting a hearing by an additional 30 days. In the event of a request for informal resolution, the State and the Administrator (or designees) shall promptly schedule a meeting to resolve the matter.

(2) If a State does not request a hearing in a timely fashion as provided in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the Administrator shall forward the proposed determination to the Secretary. Upon approval by the Secretary, the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section shall take effect immediately.

(3) If a State requests a hearing, the Secretary shall expeditiously convene a hearing on the record, which shall be conducted according to the provisions

of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 551 *et seq.* Based on the record of the proceeding, the Secretary shall determine whether the State is in nonconformity with this subpart. If the Secretary determines that the State is in nonconformity, the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section shall take effect immediately.

(4) The Secretary may reduce 10 percent of a State's apportionment of funds under 23 U.S.C. 104 prior to the administrative determination under this section in order to prevent the apportionment to the State of funds which would be affected by a determination of nonconformity.

(5) Funds withheld pursuant to a final administrative determination under this section shall be reapportioned to all other eligible States one year from the date of this determination, unless before this time the Secretary determines, on the basis of information submitted by the State and the FHWA, that the State has come into conformity with this section. If the Secretary determines that the State has come into conformity, the withheld funds shall be released to the State.

(6) The reapportionment of funds under paragraph (b)(5) of this section shall be stayed during the pendency of any proceeding for judicial review of a final administrative determination of nonconformity made by the Secretary.

PART 637—CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION AND APPROVAL

Subpart A [Reserved]

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APPENDIX A TO SUBPART B—GUIDE LETTER OF CERTIFICATION BY STATE ENGINEER

AUTHORITY: 23 U.S.C. 109, 114, and 315; 49 CFR 1.48(b).

SOURCE: 60 FR 33717, June 29, 1995, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A [Reserved]

Subpart B—Quality Assurance
Procedures for Construction

§ 637.201 Purpose.

To prescribe policies, procedures, and guidelines to assure the quality of materials and construction in all Federal-aid highway projects on the National Highway System.

§ 637.203 Definitions.

Acceptance program. All factors that comprise the State highway agency's (SHA) determination of the quality of the product as specified in the contract requirements. These factors include verification sampling, testing, and inspection and may include results of quality control sampling and testing.

Independent assurance program. Activities that are an unbiased and independent evaluation of all the sampling and testing procedures used in the acceptance program. Test procedures used in the acceptance program which are performed in the SHA's central laboratory would not be covered by an independent assurance program.

Proficiency samples. Homogeneous samples that are distributed and tested by two or more laboratories. The test results are compared to assure that the laboratories are obtaining the same results.

Qualified laboratories. Laboratories that are capable as defined by appropriate programs established by each SHA. As a minimum, the qualification program shall include provisions for checking test equipment and the laboratory shall keep records of calibration checks.

Qualified sampling and testing personnel. Personnel who are capable as defined by appropriate programs established by each SHA.

Quality assurance. All those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirements for quality.

Quality control. All contractor/vendor operational techniques and activities that are performed or conducted to fulfill the contract requirements.

Random sample. A sample drawn from a lot in which each increment in the lot has an equal probability of being chosen.

Vendor. A supplier of project-produced material that is not the contractor.

Verification sampling and testing. Sampling and testing performed to validate the quality of the product.

§ 637.205 Policy.

(a) *Quality assurance program.* Each SHA shall develop a quality assurance program which will assure that the materials and workmanship incorporated into each Federal-aid highway construction project on the NHS are in conformity with the requirements of the approved plans and specifications, including approved changes. The program must meet the criteria in § 637.207 and be approved by the FHWA.

(b) *SHA capabilities.* The SHA shall maintain an adequate, qualified staff to administer its quality assurance program. The State shall also maintain a central laboratory. The State's central laboratory shall meet the requirements in § 637.209(a)(2).

(c) *Independent assurance program.* Independent assurance samples and tests or other procedures shall be performed by qualified sampling and testing personnel employed by the SHA or its designated agent.

(d) *Verification sampling and testing.* The verification sampling and testing are to be performed by qualified testing personnel employed by the SHA or its designated agent, excluding the contractor and vendor.

(e) *Random samples.* All samples used for quality control and verification sampling and testing shall be random samples.

§ 637.207 Quality assurance program.

(a) Each SHA's quality assurance program shall provide for an acceptance program and an independent assurance (IA) program consisting of the following:

(1) Acceptance program.

(i) Each SHA's acceptance program shall consist of the following:

(A) Frequency guide schedules for verification sampling and testing which will give general guidance to

personnel responsible for the program and allow adaptation to specific project conditions and needs.

(B) Identification of the specific location in the construction or production operation at which verification sampling and testing is to be accomplished.

(C) Identification of the specific attributes to be inspected which reflect the quality of the finished product.

(ii) Quality control sampling and testing results may be used as part of the acceptance decision provided that:

(A) The sampling and testing has been performed by qualified laboratories and qualified sampling and testing personnel.

(B) The quality of the material has been validated by the verification sampling and testing. The verification testing shall be performed on samples that are taken independently of the quality control samples.

(C) The quality control sampling and testing is evaluated by an IA program.

(iii) If the results from the quality control sampling and testing are used in the acceptance program, the SHA shall establish a dispute resolution system. The dispute resolution system shall address the resolution of discrepancies occurring between the verification sampling and testing and the quality control sampling and testing. The dispute resolution system may be administered entirely within the SHA.

(2) The IA program shall evaluate the qualified sampling and testing personnel and the testing equipment. The program shall cover sampling procedures, testing procedures, and testing equipment. Each IA program shall include a schedule of frequency for IA evaluation. The schedule may be established based on either a project basis or a system basis. The frequency can be based on either a unit of production or on a unit of time.

(i) The testing equipment shall be evaluated by using one or more of the following: Calibration checks, split samples, or proficiency samples.

(ii) Testing personnel shall be evaluated by observations and split samples or proficiency samples.

(iii) A prompt comparison and documentation shall be made of test results obtained by the tester being evaluated

and the IA tester. The SHA shall develop guidelines including tolerance limits for the comparison of test results.

(iv) If the SHA uses the system approach to the IA program, the SHA shall provide an annual report to the FHWA summarizing the results of the IA program.

(3) The preparation of a materials certification, conforming in substance to Appendix A of this subpart, shall be submitted to the FHWA Division Administrator for each construction project which is subject to FHWA construction oversight activities.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 637.209 Laboratory and sampling and testing personnel qualifications.

(a) Laboratories.

(1) After June 29, 2000, all contractor, vendor, and SHA testing used in the acceptance decision shall be performed by qualified laboratories.

(2) After June 30, 1997, each SHA shall have its central laboratory accredited by the AASHTO Accreditation Program or a comparable laboratory accreditation program approved by the FHWA.

(3) After June 29, 2000, any non-SHA designated laboratory which performs IA sampling and testing shall be accredited in the testing to be performed by the AASHTO Accreditation Program or a comparable laboratory accreditation program approved by the FHWA.

(4) After June 29, 2000, any non-SHA laboratory that is used in dispute resolution sampling and testing shall be accredited in the testing to be performed by the AASHTO Accreditation Program or a comparable laboratory accreditation program approved by the FHWA.

(b) Sampling and testing personnel. After June 29, 2000, all sampling and testing data to be used in the acceptance decision or the IA program shall be executed by qualified sampling and testing personnel.

(c) Conflict of interest. In order to avoid an appearance of a conflict of interest, any qualified non-SHA laboratory shall perform only one of the following types of testing on the same project: Verification testing, quality

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control testing, IA testing, or dispute resolution testing.

APPENDIX A TO SUBPART B OF PART 637—GUIDE LETTER OF CERTIFICATION BY STATE ENGINEER

Date _____

Project No. _____

This is to certify that:

The results of the tests used in the acceptance program indicate that the materials incorporated in the construction work, and the construction operations controlled by sampling and testing, were in conformity with the approved plans and specifications. (The following sentence should be added if the IA testing frequencies are based on project quantities. All independent assurance samples and tests are within tolerance limits of the samples and tests that are used in the acceptance program.)

Exceptions to the plans and specifications are explained on the back hereof (or on attached sheet).

Director of SHA Laboratory or other appropriate SHA Official.

PART 640—CERTIFICATION ACCEPTANCE

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AUTHORITY: 23 U.S.C. 101(e), 117, and 315; 49 CFR 1.48(b).

SOURCE: 60 FR 47483, Sept. 13, 1995, unless otherwise noted.

§ 640.101 Purpose.

The purpose of this part is to provide instructions for preparation and acceptance of State certification proposals to accomplish the policies and objectives of title 23, U.S.C., using State laws, regulations, directives, and standards. Also covered are procedures for administering projects under certification acceptance and evaluating State performance.

§ 640.103 Definitions.

Unless otherwise specified in this part, the definitions in 23 U.S.C. 101(a) are applicable to this part. As used in this part:

Certification acceptance (CA) means the alternative procedure authorized by 23 U.S.C. 117(a) for administering Federal-aid highway projects not on the Interstate System.

State certification means a written statement prepared by a State highway/transportation agency setting forth the laws, regulations, directives, and standards it will use, or cause to be used, in the administration of certain highway projects.

State highway/transportation agency has the same meaning as that given for *State highway department* in 23 U.S.C. 101.

§ 640.105 Effect of certification acceptance.

(a) Acceptance of a State certification permits a State to discharge certain responsibilities otherwise assigned to the Secretary under title 23, U.S.C., for Federal-aid highway projects. A State may permit performance and project certification by capable local governments.

(b) Acceptance of a State certification does not constitute a commitment or obligation of Federal funds.

(c) Acceptance of a State certification does not preclude FHWA access to and review of a Federal-aid project at any time.

(d) Certification acceptance as an alternative procedure does not replace the fundamental provisions of law in title 23, U.S.C., with respect to the basic structure of the Federal-aid highway program. Acceptance of a CA proposal does not preclude application of any provision of title 23, U.S.C., that may be advantageous to the State.

(e) Nothing in this part shall affect or discharge any responsibility or obligation of the FHWA under any Federal law other than title 23, U.S.C.

§ 640.107 Coverage.

(a) Certification acceptance may apply to Federal-aid highway projects except projects on the Interstate System. If other FHWA regulations and title 23, U.S.C., allow, projects not on a